14.01 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at One Minute past Fourteen of the Clock.

(MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

Memorandum of understanding between the National Building Construction Corporation and the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): Sir, on behalf of Dr. U. Venkateswarlu, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English Versions) between the National Buildings Construction Corporation and the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment for the year 1997-98.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 2168/97]

The Presidential and Vice-Presidential Election (Amendment) Ordinance, 1997

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRA MONIYAN): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:-

(1) A copy each of the following Ordinances (Hindi and English versions) under article 123(2)(a) of the Constitution:-

(i) The Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections (Amendment) Ordinance, 1997 (N. 13 of 1997) promulgated by the President on the 5th June 1997.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 2169/97]

(Ii) The Out-of-turn Allotment of Government Residences (Validation) Ordinance, 1997 (No. 14 of 1997) promulgated by the President on the 21st June 1997.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 2170/97]

(2) A copy of the Himachal Pradesh Administrative Tribunal (Salaries and Allowances and Conditions of Service of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Members) Amendment Rules, 1997 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 343(E) in Gazette of India dated the 25th June, 1997, under sub-section (1) of section 37 of the Administrative Tribunals Act, 1985.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 2171/97]

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

14.04 hrs.

Desecration of Statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Police Firing in Mumbai

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA): With your permission, Sir, I would like to make a statement on the recent events in Mumbai including the act desecration of the statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and the attack on the residence of Shri Bhujbal, the Leader of the Opposition in the Council.

The Members of this august House are fully aware through media reports and otherwise about the regrettable incident of the desecration of the statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and the resultant firing by police at Ramabai Ambedkar Colony, on the Eastern Express Highway leading to Pune on July 11, 1997. Since then, my Ministry has been in constant touch with the Maharashtra State Government in order to monitor the developments. Some companies of Rapid Action Force were also made available to the State Government to help in controlling the situation.

On July 15, 1997 the matter was discussed by the Members of the Consultative Committee meeting attached to my Ministry and many Members have through notices sough to discuss the issue in Parliament.

Subsequent to the incidents in Mumbai including that of the attack on Shri Chhagan Bhujbal, Leader of the Opposition in the State Legislative Council on July 13, 1997, I along with the Union Home Secretary visited Mumbai from 15th July to 16th July, 1997 to have a first assessment of the situation there.

During the course of my visit to Mumbai, I visited the spot where the statue was desecrated, where the firing took place and also visited the house of Shri Bhujbal and also the Rajawadi Hospital where the injured people in policing firing were receiving treatment. I also had very useful discussions with the State Governor. Thereafter, I separately met the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister of the State and discussed with them the details of the incident of July 11, 1997 onwards including the attack on the house of Shri Chhagan Bhujbal. Shri Bal Thackrey, Shiv Sena supreme also met me and stated that he had publicly condemned the attack on the house of Shri Bhujbal and assured me that there would be no repetition of such incident.

During my stay, I also met the representatives of all the political parties and other groups and organisations to ascertain their views on the incident. For understandable reasons, all the parties were greatly perturbed over the incidents, particularly the attack on Shri Bhujbal's house in a high security area which is also covered by the prohibitory orders under section 37 of the Bombay Police Act. Most of them severely condemned this type of attack by the cadres of one of the ruling parties in the State Government and demanded immediate dismissal of the State Government for its failure to maintain law and order and life and